Assembly Resolution No. 2182

BY: M. of A. Rules (Reyes)

MEMORIALIZING Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 15, 2024, as Water Safety Day in the State of New York

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize official days that are set aside to increase awareness of issues that affect the lives of citizens of New York State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 15, 2024, as Water Safety Day in the State of New York, in conjunction with the observance of International Water Safety Day; and

WHEREAS, International Water Safety Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the vital necessity for water safety and the critical impact water education can have on individuals when in and around water; and

WHEREAS, According to the World Health Organization, drowning is the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide, accounting for 7% of all injury-related deaths, and there are an estimated 236,000 annual drowning deaths worldwide; and

WHEREAS, In recent years, the United States Center of Disease Control estimated an average of 3,536 fatal unintentional drownings (non-boating related) annually in the United States, resulting in about 10 deaths per day; and

WHEREAS, Research has found that early swimming skills help prevent drowning, including from The American Academy of Pediatrics which recommends swim lessons for many children starting at age 1; a study in the journal, JAMA Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine found formal swimming lessons reduced the likelihood of childhood drowning by 88%; and

WHEREAS, Drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 4, and the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 5-14; for every child that dies from drowning, there are approximately seven non-fatal drownings that require emergency care and can result in long-term health problems; and

WHEREAS, Drowning death rates for Black people are 1.5 times higher than the rates for white people, with this disparity even higher for children; and

WHEREAS, People with disabilities, special needs, and certain medical conditions are at an even higher risk of drowning; awareness of risks, land-based water safety education, and formal swim instruction can collectively reduce drowning; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York is dedicated to taking tremendous steps to help promote water safety and increase drowning prevention through legislation and shall continue to advocate and promote water safety, whether it be at a pool, lake, ocean, or anywhere where a person may swim; and

WHEREAS, Simple water safety tips like utilizing caution when walking near water, always swimming with a buddy, making sure there is a lifeguard or someone watching you in the water, jumping into water feet first, wearing a lifejacket if needed, and of course, learning to properly swim, among other tips, can save lives; and

WHEREAS, Fatal and non-fatal drowning are serious health problems and epidemics, and National Water Safety Month is an annual awareness campaign to highlight water awareness and swim safety with the hope of reducing harm and casualties relating to swimming and drowning; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body reaffirms its commitment to fostering continuing attention to water safety in New York State, and encourages all New Yorkers to participate in Water Safety Day in the State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim May 15, 2024, as Water Safety Day in the State of New York; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, and various water safety-based organizations throughout the State of New York.